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DR. CHANNING'S DISCOURSE

BEFORE

THE FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES,

WITH AN

APPENDIX.

1835

THE MINISTRY FOR THE POOR.

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES

ERRATA.

Page 6, line 3, *for* work, *read* works
" 25, " 21, *for* sphere *read* spheres
" 25, " 25, *for* power *read* powers
" 30, " 28, *after* taught *insert* us
" 36, " 30, *for* convulsed *read* Christian

APRIL 9, 1835.

By WILLIAM E. CHANNING.

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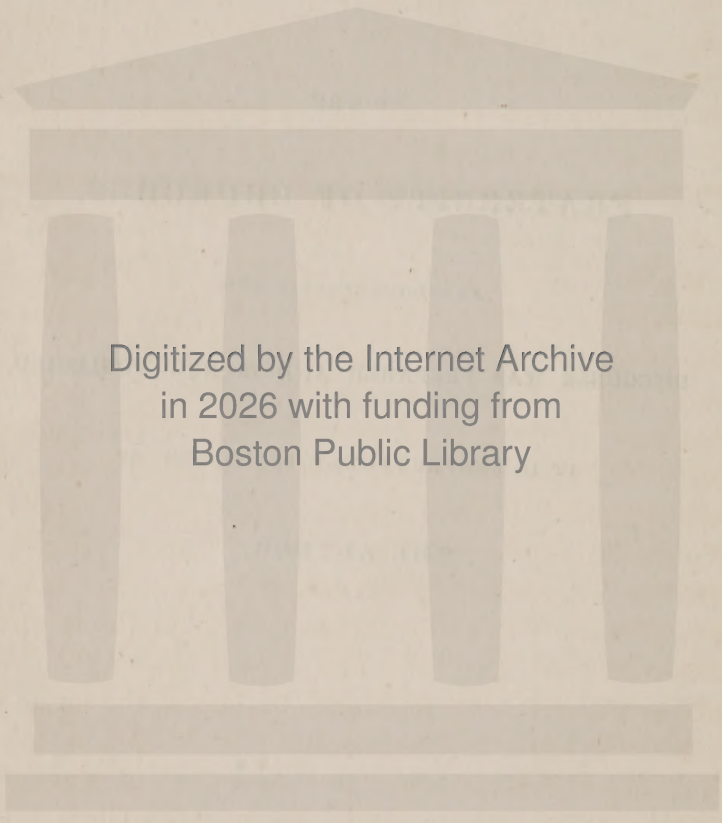
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DISCOURSE.

LUKE IV. 18.

THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE HATH ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR.

We are met together on the first anniversary of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches, an institution formed for the purpose of providing a ministry for the poor, and of thus communicating moral and spiritual blessings to the most destitute portion of the community. We may well thank God for living in a state of society, in which such a design finds cordial support. We should rejoice in this token of human progress. Man has always felt for the outward wants and sufferings of man. This institution shows, that he is alive to the higher capacities, the deeper cravings of his fellow-beings. This institution is one of the forms in which the spirit of Christianity is embodied, a spirit of reverence and love for the human soul, of sympathy with its fall, of intense desire for its redemption.

On this occasion there is but one topic of which I can speak, and that is the claims of the poor as Moral, Spiritual beings; and it is a topic on which I enter with a consciousness of insufficiency. The claims of outward and worldly things I can comprehend. I can look through wealth, pomp, rank. I can meet un-

moved the most imposing forms of earthly dignity; but the immortal principle in the heart of the poorest human being, I approach with awe. There I see a mystery in which my faculties are lost. I see an existence, before which the duration of the world and the outward Heavens is a span. I say that I see it. I am not surrendering myself to imagination; I have a consciousness of truth, or rather a consciousness of falling beneath the truth. I feel, then, my incompetency to be just to this subject. But we must do what we can. No testimony, however feeble, if lifted up in sincerity in behalf of great principles, is ever lost. Through weak man, if sanctified by a simple, humble love of truth, a higher power than man's is pleased to work. May that power overshadow us, and work within us, and open every soul to truth.

To awaken a Spiritual interest in the poor, this is my object. I wish not to diminish your sympathy with their outward condition; I would increase it. But their physical sufferings are not their chief evils. The great calamity of the poor is not their poverty, understanding this word in the usual sense, but the tendency of their privations, and of their social rank, to degradation of mind. Give them the Christian spirit, and their lot would not be intolerable. Remove from them the misery which they bring on themselves by evil-doing, and separate from their inevitable sufferings the aggravations which come from crime, and their burden would be light compared with what now oppresses them.

The outward condition of the poor is a hard one. I mean not to criticise it with the apathy of the stoic, to deny that pain is an evil, privation a loss

of good. But when I compare together different classes as existing at this moment in the civilized world, I cannot think the difference between the rich and the poor, in regard to mere physical suffering, so great as is sometimes imagined. That some of the indigent among us die of scanty food, is undoubtedly true; but vastly more in this community die from eating too much, than from eating too little; vastly more from excess, than starvation. So as to clothing, many shiver from want of defences against the cold; but there is vastly more suffering among the rich from absurd and criminal modes of dress, which fashion has sanctioned, than among the poor from deficiency of raiment. Our daughters are oftener brought to the grave by their rich attire, than our beggars by their nakedness. So the poor are often over-worked, but they suffer less than many among the rich who have no work to do, no interesting object to fill up life, to satisfy the infinite cravings of man for action. According to our present modes of education, how many of our daughters are victims of *ennui*, a misery unknown to the poor, and more intolerable than the weariness of excessive toil. The idle young man, spending the day in exhibiting his person in the street, ought not to excite the envy of the over-tasked poor, and this cumberer of the ground is found exclusively among the rich.

I repeat it, the condition of the poor deserves sympathy; but let us not, by exaggeration of its pains, turn away our minds from the great inward sources of their misery. In this city, the condition of a majority of the indigent is such, as would be thought eligible elsewhere. Insure to a European peasant an abundance of wheaten bread through every season of the year,

and he would bless his easy lot. Among us, many a poor family, if doomed to live on bread, would murmur at its hard fare ; and accordingly the table of the indigent is daily spread with condiments and viands hardly known in the cottage of the transatlantic laborer. The Greenlander and Laplander, dwelling in huts and living on food, compared with which the accommodations of our poor are abundant, are more than content. They would not exchange their wastes for our richest soils and proudest cities. It is not then the physical suffering of their poor, but their relation to the rest of society, the want of means of inward life, the degrading influences of their position, to which their chief misery is to be traced.

Let not the condition of the poor be spoken of as necessarily wretched. Give them the Christian spirit, and they would find in their lot the chief elements of good. For example, the domestic affections may and do grow up among the poor, and these are to all of us the chief springs of earthly happiness. And it deserves consideration, that the poor have their advantages as well as disadvantages in respect to domestic ties. Their narrow condition obliges them to do more for one another, than is done among the rich ; and this necessity, as is well known, sometimes gives a vigor and tenderness to the love of parents and children, brothers and sisters, not always found in the luxurious classes, where wealth destroys this mutual dependence, this need of mutual help. Nor let it be said, that the poor cannot enjoy domestic happiness for want of the means of educating their children. A sound moral judgment is of more value in education, than all wealth and all talent. For want of this, the children of men of genius and opulence are often the

worst trained in the community ; and if, by our labors, we can communicate this moral soundness to the poor, we shall open among them the fountain of the only pure domestic felicity.

In this country the poor might enjoy the most important advantages of the rich, had they the moral and religious cultivation consistent with their lot. Books find their way into every house, however mean ; and especially that book which contains more nutriment for the intellect, imagination, and heart, than all others ; I mean, of course, the Bible. And I am confident, that among the poor are those, who find in that one book, more enjoyment, more awakening truth, more lofty and beautiful imagery, more culture to the whole soul, than thousands of the educated find in their general studies, and vastly more than millions among the rich find in that superficial, transitory literature, which consumes all their reading hours.

Even the pleasures of a refined taste are not denied to the poor, but might easily be opened to them by a wise moral culture. True their rooms are not lined with works of art ; but the living beauty of nature opens on the eyes of all her children ; and we know from the history of self-educated genius, that sometimes the inhabitant of a hovel, looking out on the serene sky, the illumined cloud, the setting sun, has received into his rapt spirit, impressions of divine majesty and loveliness, to which the burning words of poetry give but faint utterance. True the rich may visit distant scenery, and feed their eyes on the rarest and most stupendous manifestations of creative power ; but the earth and common sky reveal, in some of their changeful aspects, a grandeur as awful as Niagara or the Andes ; and nothing is wanting to the poor man in his ordinary

walks, but a more spiritual eye, to discern a beauty, which has never yet been embodied in the most inspired work, of sculpture or painting.

Thus for the poor, as for all men, there are provisions for happiness ; and it deserves remark, that their happiness has a peculiar dignity. It is more honorable to be content with few outward means, than with many ; to be cheerful amidst privation, than amidst overflowing plenty. A poor man, living on bread and water, because he will not ask for more than bare sustenance requires, and leading a quiet, cheerful life through his benevolent sympathies, his joy in duty, his trust in God, is one of the true heroes of the race, and understands better the meaning of happiness, than we, who cannot be at ease, unless we clothe ourselves "in purple, and fare sumptuously every day," unless we surround, defend, and adorn ourselves with all the products of nature and art. His scantiness of outward means is a sign of inward fulness, whilst the slavery, in which most of us live to luxuries and accommodations, shows the poverty within.

I have given the fair side of the poor man's lot. I have shown the advantages placed within his reach ; but I do not therefore call him happy. His advantages are too commonly lost through want of inward culture. The poor are generally wretched with many means of good. Think not that I mean to throw one false color on their actual state. It is miserable enough to awaken deep sympathy ; but their misery springs not so much from physical causes which cannot be withstood, as from moral want. The moral influences of their condition, of their rank in society, of their connexion with other classes, these are more terrible than hunger or cold, and to these I desire to turn your chief regard.

What then are the moral influences of poverty, its influences on character, which deserve our chief attention ? As one of its most fatal effects, I would observe in the first place, that it impairs, often destroys, self-respect. I know, and rejoice to know, that the institutions of this country do much to counteract this influence of poverty ; but still it exists and works frequent debasement. It is hard for any of us to interpret justly our own nature, and how peculiarly hard for the poor ! Uninstructed in the import and dignity of their rational and moral powers, they naturally measure themselves by their outward rank. Living amidst the worshippers of wealth, they naturally feel as if degraded by the want of it. They read in the looks, tones, and manners of the world, the evidences of being regarded as an inferior race, and want inward force to repel this cruel, disheartening falsehood. They hear the word *respectable* confined to other conditions, and the word *low* applied to their own. Now habitual subjection to slight or contempt, is crushing to the spirit. It is exceedingly hard for a human being to comprehend and appreciate himself amidst outward humiliation. There is no greater man than he, who is true to himself, when all around deny and forsake him. Can we wonder that the poor, thus abandoned, should identify themselves with their lot ; that in their rags they should see the sign of inward, as well as outward degradation ?

Another cause which blights their self-respect is their dependence for pecuniary aid. It is hard to ask alms and retain an erect mind. Dependence breeds servility, and he who has stooped to another cannot be just to himself. The want of self-respect is a preparation for every evil. Degraded in their own and

others' esteem, the poor are removed from the salutary restraint of opinion, and having no caste to lose, no honor to forfeit, often abandon themselves recklessly to the grossest vice.

2. The condition of the poor is unfriendly to the action and unfolding of the intellect, a sore calamity to a rational being. In most men, indeed, the intellect is narrowed by exclusive cares for the body. In most, the consciousness of its excellence is crushed by the low uses to which it is perpetually doomed. But still in most, a degree of activity is given to the mind by the variety and extent of their plans for wealth or subsistence. The bodily wants of most carry them in a measure into the future, engage them in enterprises requiring invention, sagacity, and skill. It is the unhappiness of the poor, that they are absorbed in immediate wants, in provisions for the passing day, in obtaining the next meal, or in throwing off a present burden. Accordingly their faculties "live and move," or rather pine and perish, in the present moment. Hope and Imagination, the wings of the soul, carrying it forward and upward, languish in the poor; for the future is uninviting. The darkness of the present broods over coming years. The great idea, which stirs up in other men a world of thought, the idea of a better lot, has almost faded from the poor man's mind. He almost ceases to hope for his children, as well as for himself. Even parental love, to many the chief quickener of the intellect, stagnates through despair. Thus poverty starves the mind.

And there is another way in which it produces this effect, particularly worthy the notice of this assembly. The poor have no society beyond their own class; that is, beyond those, who are confined to their own

narrow field of thought. We all know, that it is contact with other minds, and especially with the more active and soaring, from which the intellect receives its chief impulse. Few of us could escape the paralyzing influence of perpetual intercourse with the uncultivated, sluggish, and narrow-minded; and here we see, what I wish particularly to bring to view, how the poor suffer from the boasted civilization of our times, which is built so much on the idea of Property. In communities little advanced in opulence, no impassable banner separates different classes, as among ourselves. The least improved are not thrown to a distance from those, who, through natural endowment or peculiar excitement, think more strongly than the rest; and why should such division exist any where? How cruel and unchristian are the pride and prejudice which form the enlightened into a caste, and leave the ignorant and depressed to strengthen and propagate ignorance and error without end.

3. I proceed to another evil of poverty, its disastrous influence on the domestic affections. Kindle these affections in the poor man's hut, and you give him the elements of the best earthly happiness. But the more delicate sentiments find much to chill them in the abodes of indigence. A family, crowded into a single and often narrow apartment, which must answer at once the ends of parlour, kitchen, bed-room, nursery, and hospital, must, without great energy and self-respect, want neatness, order, and comfort. Its members are perpetually exposed to annoying, petty interference. The decencies of life can be with difficulty observed. Woman, a drudge, and in dirt, loses her attractions. The young grow up without the modest reserve and delicacy of feeling, in which

purity finds so much of its defence. Coarseness of manners and language, too sure a consequence of a mode of life which allows no seclusion, becomes the habit almost of childhood, and hardens the mind for vicious intercourse in future years. The want of a neat, orderly home, is among the chief evils of the poor. Crowded in filth, they cease to respect one another. The social affections wither amidst perpetual noise, confusion, and clashing interests. In these respects, the poor often fare worse than the uncivilized man. True, the latter has a ruder hut, but his habits and tastes lead him to live abroad. Around him is a boundless, unoccupied nature, where he ranges at will, and gratifies his passion for liberty. Hardened from infancy against the elements, he lives in the bright light and pure air of heaven. In the city, the poor man must choose between his close room, and the narrow street. The appropriation of almost every spot on earth to private use, and the habits of society, do not allow him to gather his family, or meet his tribe under a spreading tree. He has a home, without the comforts of home. He cannot cheer it, by inviting his neighbours to share his repast. He has few topics of conversation with his wife and children, except their common wants. Of consequence, sensual pleasures are the only means of ministering to that craving for enjoyment, which can never be destroyed in human nature. These pleasures, in other dwellings, are more or less refined by taste. The table is spread with neatness and order; and a decency pervades the meal, which shows that man is more than a creature of sense. The poor man's table, strowed with broken food, and seldom approached with courtesy and self-respect, serves too often to nourish only a selfish, animal life,

and to bring the partakers of it still nearer to the brute. I speak not of what is necessary and universal; for poverty, under sanctifying influences, may find a heaven in its narrow home; but I speak of tendencies, which are strong, and which only a strong religious influence can overcome.

4. I proceed to another unhappy influence exerted on the poor. They live in the sight and in the midst of innumerable indulgencies and gratifications, which are placed beyond their reach. Their connexion with the affluent, though not close enough for spiritual communication, is near enough to inflame appetites, desires, wants, which cannot be satisfied. From their cheerless rooms, they look out on the abodes of luxury. At their cold, coarse meal, they hear the equipage conveying others to tables groaning under plenty, crowned with sparkling wines, and fragrant with the delicacies of every clime. Fainting with toil, they meet others, unburdened, as they think, with a labor or a care. They feel, that all life's prizes have fallen to others. Hence burning desire. Hence brooding discontent. Hence envy and hatred. Hence crime, justified in a measure to their own minds by what seem to them the unjust and cruel inequalities of social life. Here are some of the miseries of civilization. The uncivilized man is not exasperated by the presence of conditions happier than his own. There is no disproportion between his idea of happiness and his lot. Among the poor the disproportion is infinite. You all understand how much we judge our lot by comparison. Thus the very edifices, which a century ago seemed to our fathers luxurious, seem now to multitudes hardly comfortable, because surrounded by more commodious and beautiful dwellings. We little

think of the gloom added to the poor by the contiguity of the rich. They are preyed on by artificial wants, which can only be gratified by crime. They are surrounded by enjoyments, which fraud or violence can make their own. Unhappily the prevalent, I had almost said, the whole spirit of the rich, increases these temptations of the poor. Very seldom does a distinct, authentic voice of wisdom come to them from the high places of society, telling them that riches are not happiness, and that a felicity, which riches cannot buy, is within reach of all. Wealth-worship is the spirit of the prosperous, and this is the strongest possible inculcation of discontent and crime on the poor. The rich satisfy themselves with giving alms to the needy. They think little of more fatal gifts, which they perpetually bestow. They think little, that their spirit and lives, their self-indulgence, and earthliness, their idolatry of outward prosperity, and their contempt of inferior conditions, are perpetually teaching the destitute, that there is but one good on earth, namely, property, the very good in which the poor have no share. They little think, that by these influences they do much to inflame, embitter, and degrade the minds of the poor, to fasten them to the earth, to cut off their communication with Heaven.

5. I pass to another sore trial of the poor. Whilst their condition, as we have seen, denies them many gratifications, which on every side meet their view and inflame desire, it places within their reach many debasing gratifications. Human nature has a strong thirst for pleasures, which excite it above its ordinary tone, which relieve the monotony of life. This drives the prosperous from their pleasant homes to scenes of novelty and stirring amusement. How strongly must

it act on those, who are weighed down by anxieties and privations. How intensely must the poor desire to forget for a time the wearing realities of life! And what means of escape does society afford or allow them? What present do civilization and science make to the poor? Strong drink, ardent spirits, liquid poison, liquid fire, a type of the fire of hell. In every poor man's neighbourhood flows a Lethean stream, which laps him for awhile in oblivion of all his humiliations and sorrows. The power of this temptation can be little understood by those of us, whose thirst for pleasure is regularly supplied by a succession of innocent pleasures, who meet soothing and exciting objects wherever we turn. The uneducated poor, without resource in books, in their families, in a well spread board, in cheerful apartments, in places of fashionable resort, and pressed down by disappointment, debt, despondence, and exhausting toils, are driven by an impulse dreadfully strong to the haunts of intemperance; and there they plunge into a misery sorer than all the tortures invented by man. They quench the light of reason, cast off the characteristics of humanity, blot out God's image as far as they have power, and take their place among the brutes. Terrible misery! And this, I beg you to remember, comes to them from the very civilization in which they live. They are victims to the progress of science and the arts; for these multiply the poison which destroys them. They are victims to the rich; for it is the capital of the rich, which erects the distillery, and surrounds them with temptations to self-murder. They are victims to a partial advancement of society, which multiplies gratifications and allurements, without awakening proportionate moral power to withstand them.

Such are the evils of poverty. It is a condition, which offers many and peculiar obstructions to the development of intellect and affection, of self-respect and self-control. The poor are peculiarly exposed to discouraging views of themselves, of human nature, of human life. The consciousness of their own intellectual and moral power slumbers. Their faith in God's goodness, in virtue, in immortality, is obscured by the darkness of their present lot. Ignorant, desponding, and sorely tempted, have they not solemn claims on their more privileged brethren, for aids which they have never yet received ?

I have thus shown, as I proposed, that the chief evils of poverty are moral in their origin and character; and for these I would awaken your concern. With physical sufferings we sympathise. When shall the greater misery move our hearts ? Is there nothing to startle us in the fact, that in every large city, dwells a multitude of human beings, falling or fallen into extreme moral degradation, living in dark, filthy houses, or in damp, unventilated cellars, where the eye lights on no beauty and the ear is continually wounded with discord, where the outward gloom is a type of the darkened mind, where the name of God is heard only when profaned, where charity is known only as a resource for sloth, where the child is trained amidst coarse manners, impure words, and the fumes of intemperance, and is thence sent forth to prowl as a beggar. From these abodes issues a louder, more piercing cry for help and strength, than physical want ever uttered. I do not mean that all the poor are such as I have described. Far from it. Among them are the "salt of the earth," the "lights of the world," the elect of God. There is no necessary connexion

of poverty and crime. Christianity knows no distinction of rank, and has proved itself equal to the wants of all conditions of men. Still poverty has tendencies to the moral degradation, which I have described; and to counteract these should be esteemed one of the most solemn duties and precious privileges, bequeathed by Christ to his followers.

From the views now given of the chief evils of poverty, it follows, that Moral and Religious Culture is the great blessing to be bestowed on the poor. By this, it is not intended that their physical condition demands no aid. Let charity minister to their pressing wants and sufferings. But let us bear it in mind, that no charity produces permanent good, but that which goes beneath the body, which reaches the mind, which touches the inward springs of improvement, and awakens some strength of purpose, some pious or generous emotion, some self-respect. That charity is most useful, which removes obstructions to well-doing and temptations to evil from the way of the poor, and encourages them to strive for their own true good. Something, indeed, may be done for the moral benefit of the indigent by wise legislation; I do not mean by poor laws; but by enactments intended to remove, as far as possible, degrading circumstances from their condition. For example, the laws should prohibit the letting of an apartment to a poor family, which is not tenantable, which cannot but injure health, which cannot be ventilated, which wants the necessary means of preventing accumulations of filth. Such ordinances, connected with provisions for cleansing every alley, and for carrying pure, wholesome water in abundance to every dwelling, would do not a little for

the health, cleanliness, and self-respect of the poor, and on these, their moral well-being in no small degree depends.

Our chief reliance, however, must be placed on more direct and powerful means than legislation. The poor need, and must receive Moral and Religious Culture, such as they have never yet enjoyed. I say Culture; and I select this term, because it expresses the development of Inward Principles; and without this, nothing effectual can be done for rich or poor. Unhappily, religion has been, for the most part, taught to the poor mechanically, superficially, as a tradition. It has been imposed on them as a restraint, or a form; it has been addressed to the senses, or to the sensual imagination, and not to the higher principles. An outward hell, or an outward heaven, has too often been the highest motive brought to bear on their minds. But something more is wanted; a deeper work, an inward culture, the development of the reason, the conscience, the affections, and the moral will. True religion is a life unfolded within, not something forced on us from abroad. The poor man needs an elevating power within, to resist the depressing tendencies of his outward lot. Spiritual culture is the only effectual service we can send him, and let his misery plead with us to bestow it to the extent of our power.

Had I time, I might show that moral and religious principles, as far as they are strengthened in the breasts of the poor, meet all the wants and evils, which have now been portrayed; that they give them force to bear up against all the adverse circumstances of their lot, inspire them with self-respect, refine their manners, give impulse to their intellectual powers, open to them the springs of domestic peace, teach

them to see without murmuring the superior enjoyments of others, and rescue them from the excesses into which multitudes are driven by destitution and despair. But these topics are not only too extensive, but are to a degree familiar, though by no means felt as they should be. I conceive that I shall better answer the purpose of awakening a spiritual interest in this class of society, by confining myself to a single point, by showing, that the Moral and Religious Culture which I claim for the poor, is the highest cultivation, which a human being can receive. We are all of us, I fear, blinded on this subject by the errors and prejudices of our own education. We are apt to imagine, that the only important culture of a human being, comes from libraries, literary institutions, and elegant accomplishments; that is, from means beyond the reach of the poor. Advantages offered by wealth, seem to us the great, and even essential means of bringing forward the human mind. Perhaps we smile at hearing the word *cultivation* applied to the poor. The best light which their condition admits, seems darkness compared with the knowledge imparted by our seminaries of learning; and the highest activity of mind to which they can be excited, is scornfully contrasted with what is called forth in their superiors by works of philosophy and genius. There is among not a few, a contemptuous estimate of the culture which may be extended to the poor, of the good which they are capable of receiving; and hence, much of the prevalent indifference as to furnishing them the means of spiritual growth. Now this is a weak and degrading prejudice. I affirm, that the highest culture is open alike to rich and poor. I affirm, that the rich may extend their most precious acquisitions to the poor. There is

nothing in indigence to exclude the noblest improvements. The impartial Father designs his best gifts for all. Exclusive good, or that which only a few can enjoy, is comparatively worthless. Essential good is the most freely diffused. It is time to put away our childish notions as to human improvement; it is time to learn, that advantages, which are a monopoly of the few, are not necessary to the development of human nature, that the soul grows best by helps, which are accessible to all.

The truth is, that there is no cultivation of the human being worthy of the name, but that which begins and ends with the Moral and Religious nature. No other teaching can make a Man. We are striving, indeed, to develope the soul almost exclusively by intellectual stimulants and nutriment, by schools and colleges, by accomplishments and fine arts. We are hoping to form men and women by literature and science; but all in vain. We shall learn in time, that moral and religious culture is the foundation and strength of all true cultivation; that we are deforming human nature by the means relied on for its growth, and that the poor, who receive a care which awakens their consciences and moral sentiments, start under happier auspices than the prosperous, who place supreme dependence on the education of the intellect and the taste.

It is common to measure the cultivation of men by their knowledge; and this is certainly an important element and means of improvement. But knowledge is various, differing in different men according to the objects which most engage their minds; and by these objects its worth must be judged. It is not the extent, but the *kind* of knowledge, which determines the meas-

ure of cultivation. In truth, it is foolish to talk of any knowledge as extensive. The most eminent philosopher is of yesterday, and knows nothing. Newton felt that he had gathered but a few pebbles on the shores of a boundless ocean. The moment we attempt to penetrate a subject, we learn that it has unfathomable depths. The known, is a sign of the infinite unknown. Every discovery conducts us to an abyss of darkness. In every thing, from the grain of sand to the stars, the wise man finds mysteries, before which his knowledge shrinks into nothingness. It is the kind, not the extent of knowledge, by which the advancement of a human being must be measured; and that kind which alone exalts a man, is placed within the reach of all. Moral and Religious Truth, this is the treasure of the intellect, and all are poor without it. This transcends physical truth, as far as mind transcends matter, or as heaven is lifted above earth. Indeed, physical science parts with its chief dignity, when separated from morals; when it is not used to shadow forth, confirm, and illustrate spiritual truth.

The true cultivation of a human being, consists in the development of great moral ideas; that is, the Ideas of God, of Duty, of Right, of Justice, of Love, of Self-sacrifice, of Moral Perfection as manifested in Christ, of Happiness, of Immortality, of Heaven. The elements or germs of these Ideas, belong to every soul, constitute its essence, and are intended for endless expansion. These are the chief distinctions of our nature; they constitute our humanity. To unfold these, is the great work of our being. The Light in which these Ideas rise on the mind, the Love which they awaken, and the Force of Will, with which they

are brought to sway the outward and inward life, here, and here only, are the measures of human cultivation.

These views show us, that the highest culture is within the reach of the poor. It is not knowledge poured on us from abroad, but the development of the elementary principles of the soul itself, which constitutes the true growth of a human being. Undoubtedly, knowledge from abroad is essential to the awakening of these principles. But that, which conduces most to this end, is offered alike to rich and poor. Society and Experience, Nature and Revelation, our chief moral and religious teachers, and the great quickeners of the soul, do not open their schools to a few favorites, do not initiate a small caste into their mysteries, but are ordained by God to be lights and blessings to all.

The highest culture, I repeat it, is in reach of the poor, and is sometimes attained by them. Without science, they are often wiser than the philosopher. The astronomer disdains them, but they look above his stars. The geologist disdains them, but they look deeper than the earth's centre; they penetrate their own souls, and find there mightier, diviner elements, than upheaved continents attest. In other words, the great ideas, of which I have spoken, may be, and often are, unfolded more in the poor man, than among the learned or renowned; and in this case the poor man is the most cultivated. — For example, take the idea of Justice. Suppose a man, eminent for acquisitions of knowledge, but in whom this idea is but faintly developed. By justice he understands little more than respect for the rights of property. That it means respect for all the rights, and especially for the moral claims, of every human being, of the lowest as well as

most exalted, has perhaps never entered his mind, much less been expanded and invigorated into a broad, living conviction. Take now the case of a poor man, to whom, under Christ's teaching, the idea of the Just has become real, clear, bright, and strong; who recognises, to its full extent, the right of property, though it operates against himself; but who does not stop here; who comprehends the higher rights of men as rational and moral beings, their right to exercise and unfold all their powers, their right to the means of improvement, their right to search for truth and to utter their honest convictions, their right to consult first the monitor in their own breasts and to follow wherever it leads, their right to be esteemed and honored according to their moral efforts, their right, when injured, to sympathy and succour against every oppressor. Suppose, I say, the poor man to rise to the comprehension of this enlarged justice, to revere it, to enthrone it over his actions, to render to every human being, friend or foe, near or far off, whatever is his due, to abstain conscientiously, not only from injurious deeds, but from injurious thoughts, judgments, feelings, and words. Is he not a more cultivated man, and has he not a deeper foundation and surer promise of truth, than the student, who, with much outward knowledge, does not comprehend men's highest rights, whose scientific labors are perhaps degraded by injustice towards his rivals, who, had he power, would fetter every intellect, which threatens to outstrip his own?

The great idea, on which human cultivation especially depends, is that of God. This is the concentration of all that is beautiful, glorious, holy, blessed. It transcends immeasurably in worth and dignity all the science treasured up in Cyclopedias or libraries;

and this may be unfolded in the poor, as truly as in the rich. It is not an idea to be elaborated by studies, which can be pursued only in leisure or by opulence. Its elements belong to every soul, and are especially to be found in our moral nature, in the idea of duty, in the feeling of reverence, in the approving sentence which we pass on virtue, in our disinterested affections, and in the wants and aspirations which carry us toward the Infinite. There is but one way of unfolding these germs of the idea of God, and that is, faithfulness to the best convictions of duty and of the Divine Will, which we have hitherto gained. God is to be known by obedience, by likeness, by sympathy, that is, by moral means, which are open alike to rich and poor. Many a man of science has not known him. The pride of science, like a thick cloud, has hidden from the philosopher the Spiritual Sun, the only true light, and for want of this quickening ray, he has fallen in culture far, very far, below the poor.

These remarks have been drawn from me by the proneness of our times to place human culture in physical knowledge, and especially in degrees of it denied to the mass of the people. To this knowledge I would on no account deny great value. In its place, it is an important means of human improvement. I look with admiration on the intellectual force, which combines and masters scattered facts, and by analysis and comparison ascends to the general laws of the material universe. But the philosopher, who does not see in the force within him something nobler than the outward nature which he analyzes, who, in tracing mechanical and chemical agencies, is unconscious of a higher action in his own soul, who is not led by all finite powers to the Omnipotent,

and who does not catch, in the order and beauty of the universe, some glimpses of Spiritual Perfection, stops at the very threshold of the temple of truth. Miserably narrow is the culture, which confines the soul to Matter, which turns it to the Outward, as to something nobler than itself. I fear, the spirit of science, at the present day, is too often a degradation, rather than the true culture of the soul. It is the bowing down of the heaven-born spirit before unthinking mechanism. It seeks knowledge, rather for animal, transitory purposes, than for the nutriment of the imperishable inward life; and yet the worshippers of science pity or contemn the poor, because denied this means of cultivation. Unhappy poor! shut out from libraries, laboratories, and learned institutes! In view of this world's wisdom, it avails you nothing, that your own nature, manifested in your own and other souls, that God's word and works, that the ocean, earth, and sky are laid open to you; that you may acquaint yourselves with the Divine Perfections, with the character of Christ, with the duties of life, with the virtues, the generous sacrifices, and the beautiful and holy emotions, which are a revelation and pledge of Heaven. All these are nothing, do not lift you to the rank of cultivated men, because the mysteries of the telescope and microscope, of the air-pump and crucible are not revealed to you! I would they were revealed to you. I believe the time is coming when Christian benevolence will delight in spreading all truth, and all refinements through all ranks of society. But meanwhile be not discouraged. One ray of moral and religious truth is worth all the wisdom of the schools. One lesson from Christ will carry you higher, than years of study under those, who are too enlightened to follow this celestial guide.

My hearers, do not contemn the poor man for his ignorance. Has he seen the Right? Has he felt the binding force of the Everlasting Moral Law? Has the beauty of virtue, in any of its forms, been revealed to him? Then he has entered the highest school of wisdom. Then a light has dawned within him, worth all the physical knowledge of all worlds. It almost moves me to indignation, when I hear the student exalting his science, which at every step meets impenetrable darkness, above the idea of Duty, and above veneration for goodness and God. It is true, and ought to be understood, that outward nature, however tortured, probed, dissected, never reveals truths so sublime or precious, as are wrapt up in the consciousness of the meanest individual, and laid open to every eye in the word of Christ.

I trust it will not be inferred from what I have said of the superiority of moral and religious culture to physical science, that the former requires or induces a neglect or disparagement of the latter. No, it is the friend of all truth, the enemy of none. It is propitious to intellect, and incites to the investigation of the laws and order of the universe. This view deserves a brief illustration, because an opposite opinion has sometimes prevailed, because reproach has sometimes been thrown on religious culture, as if it narrowed the mind and barred it against the lights of physical science. There cannot be a more groundless charge. Superstition contracts and darkens the mind; but that living faith in moral and religious truth, for which I contend as the highest culture of rich and poor, is in no respect narrow or exclusive. It does not fasten the mind for ever on a few barren doctrines. In proportion to its growth, it cherishes our whole nature, gives a wide

range to thought, opens the intellect to the true, and the imagination to the beautiful. The great principles of moral and religious science are, above all others, fruitful, life-giving, and have intimate connexions with all other truth. The Love towards God and man, which is the centre in which they meet, is the very spirit of research into nature. It finds perpetual delight in tracing out the harmonies and vast and beneficent arrangements of creation, and inspires an interest in the works of the Universal Father, more profound, intense, enduring, than philosophical curiosity. I conceive, too, that faith in moral and religious truth has strong affinities with the scientific spirit, and thus contributes to its perfection. Both, for example, have the same objects, that is, universal truths. As another coincidence, I would observe, that it is the highest prerogative of scientific genius, to interpret obscure signs, to dart from faint hints to sublime discoveries, to read in a few fragments the history of vanished worlds and ages, to detect in the falling apple the law which rules the sphere. Now it is the property of moral and religious faith, to see in the finite the manifestation of the Infinite, in the present the germ of the boundless future, in the visible the traces of the Incomprehensible Unseen, in the power, and wants of the soul its imperishable destiny. Such is the harmony between the religious and the philosophical spirit. It is to a higher moral and religious culture, that I look for a higher interpretation of nature. The laws of nature, we must remember, had their origin in the Mind of God. Of this they are the product, expression, and type; and I cannot but believe, that the human mind, which best understands, and which partakes most largely of the divine, has a power of interpreting

nature, which is accorded to no other. It has harmonies with the system, which it is to unfold. It contains in itself the principles, which gave birth to creation. As yet, science has hardly penetrated beneath the surface of nature. The principles of animal and vegetable life, of which all organized beings around us are but varied modifications, the forces which pervade or constitute matter, and the links between matter and mind, are as yet wrapt in darkness; and how little is known of the adaptations of the physical and the spiritual world to one another. Whence is light to break in on these depths of creative wisdom? I look for it to the spirit of philosophy, baptized, hallowed, exalted, made piercing by a new culture of the moral and religious principles of the human soul.

The topic opens before me as I advance. The superiority of moral and religious to all other culture, is confirmed by a throng of arguments not yet touched. The peculiar wisdom which this culture gives, by revealing to us the end, the Ultimate Good of our being, which nothing else teaches; the peculiar power which it gives, power over ourselves, so superior to the most extensive sway over the outward universe; the necessity of moral and religious culture to make knowledge a blessing, to save it from being a curse; these are weighty considerations which press on my mind, but cannot be urged. They all go to show, that the culture which the poor may receive, is worth all others; that in sending among them religious and moral influences, you send the highest good of the universe.

My friends, I have now set before you the chief evils of the poor, and have shown you the greatness and

dignity of the culture which is within their reach; and the great conviction, which I wish by these views to carry home to every mind, is, that we are solemnly bound to cherish and manifest a strong moral and religious interest in the poor; and to give them, as far as we have power, the means of moral and religious cultivation. Your sympathies with their bodily wants and pains, I, of course, would not weaken. We must not neglect their bodies under pretence of caring for their souls; nor must we, on the other hand, imagine, that in providing for their outward wants, we have acquitted ourselves of all Christian obligations. To scatter from our abundance occasional alms, is not enough; we must bring them to our minds as susceptible of deeper evils, than hunger and cold; and as formed for higher goods than food or the cheering flame. The love of Christ toward them, should seem to us no extravagance, no blind enthusiasm, but a love due to human nature in all its forms. To look beyond the outward to the Spiritual, in man, is the great distinction of Christian love. The soul of a fellow-creature must come out, if I may so say, and become more visible and prominent to us, than his bodily frame. To see and estimate the spiritual nature of the poor, is greater wisdom, than to span earth or heaven. To elevate this, is a greater work, than to build cities. To give moral life to the fallen, is a higher achievement, than to raise the dead from their graves. Such is the philanthropy, which characterizes our religion; and without this, we can do little effectual good to the poor.

I am here teaching a difficult, but great duty. To acquire and maintain an unaffected conviction of the superiority of the Spiritual in man to every thing

outward, is a hard task, especially to the prosperous, and yet among the most essential. In the poor man, walking through our streets, with a haggard countenance and tottering step, we ought to see something, greater than all the opulence and splendor, which surround him. On this foundation of respect for every soul, are built all social duties, and none can be thoroughly performed without it. On this point, I feel, that I use no swollen language. Words cannot exaggerate the worth of the soul. We have all felt, when looking above us into the atmosphere, that there was an infinity of space, which we could not explore. When I look into man's spirit and see there the germs of an immortal life, I feel more deeply, that an infinity lies hid beyond what I see. In the idea of Duty, which springs up in every human heart, I discern a Law more sacred and boundless than gravitation; which binds the soul to a more glorious universe, than that to which attraction binds the body; and which is to endure, though the laws of physical nature pass away. Every moral sentiment, every intellectual action, is to me a hint, a prophetic sign of a spiritual power to be expanded for ever, just as a faint ray from a distant star is significant of unimaginable splendor. And if this be true, is not a human being wronged, greatly wronged, who awakens in his fellow-creatures no moral concern, who receives from them no spiritual care?

It is the boast of our country, that the civil and political rights of every human being are secured; that impartial law watches alike, over rich and poor. But man has other, and more important, than civil rights; and this is especially true of the poor. To him who owns nothing, what avails it, that he lives in a country

where property is inviolable; or what mighty boon is it to him, that every citizen is eligible to office, when his condition is an insuperable bar to promotion. To the poor, as to all men, moral rights are most important; the right to be regarded according to their nature, to be regarded, not as animals or material instruments, but as men; the right to be esteemed and honored, according to their fidelity to the moral law; and their right to whatever aids their fellow-beings can offer for their moral improvement, for the growth of their highest powers. These rights are founded on the supremacy of the moral nature, and until they are recognised the poor are deeply wronged.

Our whole connexion with the poor should tend to awaken in them the consciousness of their moral powers and responsibility, and to raise them in spirit and hope above their lot. They should be aided to know themselves, by the estimate we form of them. They should be rescued from self-contempt, by seeing others impressed with the great purpose of their being. We may call the poor unfortunate, but never call them low. If faithful to their light, they stand among the high. They have no superiors, but in those who follow a brighter, purer light; and to withhold from them respect, is to defraud their virtue of a support, which is among the most sacred rights of man. Are they morally fallen and lost. They should still learn, in our unaffected concern, the worth of the fallen soul, and learn that nothing seems to us so fearful as its degradation.

This moral, spiritual interest in the poor, we should express and make effectual, by approaching them, by establishing an intercourse with them, as far as con-

sists with other duties. We must live with them, not as another race, but as brethren. Our Christian principles must work a new miracle, must exorcise and expel the spirit of caste. The outward distinctions of life must seem to us not "a great gulf," but superficial lines, which the chances of a day may blot out, and which are broad only to the narrow-minded. How can the educated and improved communicate themselves to their less favored fellow-creatures, but by coming near them? The strength, happiness, and true civilization of a community are determined by nothing more, than by this fraternal union among all conditions of men. Without this, a civil war virtually rages in a state. For the sake of rich as well as poor, there should be a mutual interest binding them together; there should be but one caste, that of humanity.

To render this connexion interesting and useful, we must value and cultivate the power of acting morally on the poor. There is no art so divine, as that of reaching and quickening other minds. Do not tell me you are unequal to this task. What! call yourselves educated, and yet want power to approach and aid your unimproved fellow-creatures? Of what use is education, if it do not fit us to receive and give freely in our various social connexions? How wasted has been our youth, if it has taught us only the dialect and manners of a select class, and not taught us the language of humanity, not taught to mix with and act on the mass of our fellow-creatures? How far are you raised above the poor, if you cannot comprehend, guide, or sway them? The chief endowment of a social being, I mean the power of imparting what is true and good in your own souls, you have yet to learn. You cannot learn it too soon.

Yes, I call you to seek and use the power of speaking to the minds of the ignorant and poor, and especially of the poor child. Strive, each of you, to bring at least one human being to the happiness, for which God made him. Awaken him to some inward moral activity, for on this, not on mere outward teaching, the improvement of rich and poor alike depends. Strive to raise him above the crushing necessities of the body, by turning him to the great, kindling purpose of his being. Show him, that the fountain of all happiness is within us, and that this fountain may be opened alike in every soul. Show him, how much virtue and peace he may gain by fidelity to his domestic relations; how much progress he may make by devout and resolute use of his best opportunities; what a near union he may form with God; how beneficent an influence he may exert in his narrow sphere; what heroism may be exercised amidst privations and pains; how suffering may be turned to glory; how heaven may begin in the most unprosperous condition on earth. Surely he who can carry such truths to any human being, is charged with a glorious mission from above.

In these remarks, I have urged on all who hear me, a personal interest in the moral well-being of the poor. I am aware, however, that many can devote but little personal care to this work. But what they cannot do themselves, they can do by others; and this I hold to be one of our most sacred duties as Christians. If we cannot often visit the poor ourselves, we may send those who are qualified to serve them better. We can support ministers to study and apply the means of enlightening, comforting, reforming, and saving the ignorant and depressed. Every man,

whom God has prospered, is bound to contribute to this work. The Christian ministry is indeed a blessing to all, but above all to the poor. We, who have leisure and quiet homes, and can gather round us the teachers of all ages in their writings, can better dispense with the living teacher, than the poor, who are nnused to learn from books, and unaccustomed to mental effort, who can only learn through the eye and ear, through the kind look and the thrilling voice. Send them the ministers of God's truth and grace. And think not, that this office may be filled by any who will take it. There are some, I know, perhaps not a few, who suppose the most common capacities equal to the Christian ministry in general, and who, of course, will incline to devolve the office of teaching the ignorant and destitute on men unfit for other vocations. Away with this disgraceful error! If there be an office worthy of angels, it is that of teaching Christian truth. The Son of God hallowed it, by sustaining it in his own person. All other labors sink before it. Royalty is impotence and a vulgar show, compared with the deep and quickening power, which many a Christian teacher has exerted on the immortal soul. Profound intellect, creative genius, thrilling eloquence, can no where find such scope and excitement, as in the study and communication of moral and religious truth, as in breathing into other minds the wisdom and love, which were revealed in Jesus Christ ; and the time will come, when they will joyfully consecrate themselves to this as their true sphere. That the ministry of the poor may be sustained by a man wanting some qualifications for a common congregation, is true ; but he needs no ordinary gifts, a sound judgment, a clear mind, an insight into human nature, a spirit of patient

research, the power of familiar and striking illustration of truth, a glowing heart, an unaffected self-devotion to the service of mankind. Such men we are bound to provide for the poor, if they can be secured. He who will not contribute to the moral and religious culture of the destitute, is unworthy to live in Christendom. He deserves to be banished beyond the light which he will not spread. Let him deny his religion if he will; but to believe in it, and yet not seek to impart it to those who can receive no other treasure, is to cast contempt on its excellence, and to harden himself against the most sacred claims of humanity.

My friends, it is a cause of gratitude, that so much has been done in this city to furnish such a ministry as now has been described. The poor, I believe, are provided for here, as in no other place in our country. The fraternity of churches, which I address, have in their service three ministers for this work, and the number, it is expected, will be increased; and we all know that they have not labored in vain. Their good influence we cannot doubt. The cause has been signally prospered by God. Since the institution of this ministry, it has not only carried instruction, counsel, reproof, hope, and moral strength to multitudes, who would otherwise have heard no encouraging voice, would have met no outward remembrancers of Christian duty. It has produced in other classes of society still more promising effects. It has produced a connexion of the rich with the poor, a knowledge of their real state and wants, a sympathy with them, an interest in their well-being, which are the signs of a lasting improvement in society. This ministry has not been lifeless machinery. It has vitality, earnest-

ness, force. It does not rest in a round of regular services, but seeks new means of reaching the poor. It particularly seeks to act on the children. Not content with gathering them in Sunday schools, it forms congregations of them for worship, and adapts to them the ordinary services of the church, so as to fix attention and touch the heart. What an invaluable service to humanity! Formerly, these children, unprovided with the means of public worship, never guided by their parents to the house of prayer, wasted and worse than wasted the Sunday in the streets, and found or made this holy season, a day of peculiar temptation and crime. Whilst the ministers of the poor are faithful to the adult, they give a special care to children, and through the child often reach the parents' heart. Through their efforts, the young, who had been brought up to beg, have often been sent to the public school or the Sunday school, and in this way many a heedless foot, going down to ruin, has been turned to the path of duty. It is confidently stated that since the establishment of this ministry a few years ago, street-beggary has decreased, notwithstanding the rapid growth of our population. Happily, men of intelligence and noble hearts are willing to enter this field, and new laborers are needed. It is important that the ministers of the poor should extend their care beyond the most indigent, to that class from which the ranks of indigence are recruited, I mean to that class of laborers, who are hovering over the brink of poverty, who depend on each day's toil for each day's food, and whom a short sickness or deficiency of employment reduces to want. Among these, the degrading infidelity of our days finds many of its victims, and on this account they peculiarly need to be visited

by Christian friendship and the light of truth. To connect these with regular congregations, and to incite them to contribute, to the support of public worship, some part of what they now too generally expend in pernicious indulgencies, would be to render an essential service to morals and religion.

The work of a minister for the poor covers much ground, and it demands superior minds. This body of men are set apart, not only to act on individuals, but to study poverty in all its aspects, in its causes, its influences, its various shapes, its growth, and its decline, and thus to give light to the legislator and philanthropist in the great work of its prevention and cure. To me, this ministry is peculiarly interesting, regarded as the beginning of a series of operations for banishing from society its chief calamity and reproach, and for changing the face of the civilized and Christian world. I see in it the expression of a silently growing purpose, that Christian communities shall not always be deformed and disgraced by the presence of an ignorant, destitute, miserable horde; that in the bosom of civilization there shall no longer exist a more wretched, degraded portion of human beings, than can be found in savage life. This horrible contrast of condition, which all large cities present, has existed too long. Shall it endure for ever? My friends, we all, as well as others, have hitherto been dreadfully insensible to this sorest evil under the sun. Long use has hardened us to it. We have lived comfortably, perhaps luxuriously, in our dwellings, whilst within a stone's throw, were fellow-creatures, the children of our Father in Heaven, as nobly born and gifted as ourselves, in whose countenances might be read brutal ignorance, hopeless misery, and degrading

vice. We have passed them in the street, not only without a tear, but without a thought. Oh, how seldom has a pang shot through our hearts at the sight of our ruined fellow-creatures. Shall this insensibility continue for ever? Shall not a new love succeed to this iron hardness of heart? Do not call the evil remediless. Sure I am that, at this moment, there is enough of piety, philanthropy, and moral power in this community, to work deep changes in the poorer classes, could these energies, now scattered and slumbering, be brought to bear wisely and perseveringly on the task. Shall we decline this work? If so, we decline the noblest labor of philanthropy. If so, we must suffer, and we ought to suffer. Society ought to be troubled, to be shaken, yea convulsed, until its solemn debt to the ignorant and poor be paid. Poor there will be, but they need not, must not exist as a degraded, hopeless caste. They need not, must not be cut off from the brotherhood of humanity. Their children must not be left to inherit and propagate their crimes and woes. To put an end to such a class, is the highest office of Christian philanthropy. Do you ask how it is to be done. I answer, Christianity has wrought mighty revolutions, and in these we have an earnest of what it is able and destined to accomplish. Let us bring this into new contact with the poor. Let us send forth men, imbued with its spirit, to preach it to the poor, and still more to study poverty in all its forms, that the moral pestilence, which has so long ravaged the convulsed world, may at last be stayed.

I now see before me the representatives of several congregations of this city, which have united to support the ministry for the poor. Thanks to God, for this

manifestation of the spirit and power of Christianity. This connexion, framed only for purposes of Christian philanthropy, looking only to the spiritual relief of our depressed fellow-creatures, and incapable of being perverted to the accumulation of ecclesiastical power, is the happiest means which could be devised, to bring our churches into stronger sympathy and closer friendship, without infringing, in the smallest degree, that principle of independence or self-government on which they are built. Is it not a plain truth, that every Christian congregation, besides providing for its own spiritual wants, is bound to devote itself to the general cause of Christianity, and to provide for spreading its own light and privileges to the destitute? By this fraternity we are discharging, in part, this sacred obligation. May it be sustained with increasing zeal, with unshaken faith, with glorious success.

My friends, is it necessary, that I should urge you to contribute of your substance to the work which has now been laid before you? I am speaking to the prosperous. Let the Goodness, which has prospered you, teach you the spirit in which your wealth or competence should be used. What is the true use of prosperity? Not to minister to self-indulgence and ostentation; not to widen the space between you and the less prosperous; not to multiply signs of superior rank; not to raise us to an eminence, whence we may look down on the multitude as an inferior race; but to multiply our bonds of union with our fellow-creatures, to spread our sympathies far and wide, to give us nobler spheres of action, to make us more eminently the delegates and representatives of divine beneficence. What is the true use of increasing wealth in a city? It is not, that more magnificent structures should be

reared, but that our dwellings should be inhabited by a more intelligent and virtuous people; that institutions for awakening intellectual and moral life should be brought to bear on the whole community; that the individual may be carried forward to his true happiness and perfection; that society may be bound together by stronger and purer bonds, and that the rigid laws of earthly governments may be more and more superseded by the Law of Love. Without such influences, wealth is turned into a snare and curse. If, indeed, our prosperity is to be used to spread luxurious and selfish modes of life, to form a frivolous class of fashion, to produce more striking contrasts between unfeeling opulence and abject penury, to corrupt manners and harden the heart, better were it for us, that by the just judgment of God, it should be sunk into the depths of the sea. It avails little, that intercourse is more polished, and a new grace is thrown over life. The simple question is, Do we better understand and more strongly feel our relations to God and to our fellow-creatures? Without this, our boasted civilization is a whited sepulchre, fair to the eye, but inwardly "full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness." — But I cannot end this discourse with the voice of warning. You deserve to hear the voice of encouragement and hope. One good work you are carrying on, as this anniversary testifies. One institution for instructing the ignorant and raising up the fallen, you have sustained. Let it not fall. Extend and strengthen it. Make it permanent. Bind it up with the institutions which you support, for your own religious improvement. Transmit it to your children. Let your children learn, from this your example, to take part in the cause of Christ, of prophets and apostles, of holy

men of all ages, in the work of regenerating society, and of extending to the whole human family, the light and blessings of the Christian faith.

NOTE.

It may be proper to observe, that the ministry for the poor, which is supported by the Fraternity of Churches, was established before the Fraternity. It commenced nine years ago. The first minister was the Rev. Dr. Tuckerman, to whose faithful and disinterested labors its success is chiefly to be ascribed.

APPENDIX.

The Benevolent Fraternity of Churches grew out of a desire to place the Ministry-at-large in Boston on a broad and permanent foundation. This Ministry was established in November, 1826, by the Executive Committee of the American Unitarian Association, and continued to be under their charge for the next seven years and a half, during which period it was sustained almost wholly by the subscriptions of ladies in different religious societies of the city. For the greater part of this time, Dr. Tuckerman was the only person engaged in its duties; in August, 1832, Mr. Barnard was associated with Dr. Tuckerman. The benefits of their labors were seen to be so great, and the want of more ministers was so evident, that the Committee of the Unitarian Association became anxious to secure more suitable provision both for the continuance and the enlargement of the Ministry, than the liberality (though it had been free and generous) of disconnected individuals. It seemed to them that it should be placed among the regular institutions of the city, and be made an object of general attention and support. For this purpose they invited several gentlemen to meet at the Berry Street Vestry on the evening of April 3, 1834, and laid the whole subject before them for their advice and action. At this meeting a Committee of five was appointed, "to digest a plan for a systematic organization for the moral and religious improvement of the poor in this city." On the 27th of April this Committee presented their Report to a still larger meeting of gentlemen at the Atheneum Hall, by whom it was accepted, and the same Committee were directed to adopt whatever measures might be necessary to carry its suggestions into

effect. The Report recommended a concurrence of the thirteen Unitarian congregations in the support of the Ministry-at-large, and of other means for "the improvement of the moral state of the poor and irreligious of this city." As other denominations of Christians were pursuing their own methods of effecting the same object, it was thought best that "we should act independently of them, since we might then secure the harmony and respect which would be endangered by an attempt to control each other." At the same time, it was held to be of the first importance, that "the independence of our several churches should be scrupulously regarded." The union which was proposed was therefore of such a nature as could lay no restraint on the separate action of each church. According to the plan offered by the Committee, each congregation would, in such manner as it should deem best, organize itself as an association for the spiritual advancement of the neglected and vicious portions of our community, and would join with the other similar associations in the support of some general measures for this end. It was "not the wish to add another to the eleemosynary institutions of the city, to which the poor might resort either for the supply of the comforts or for the relief of the necessities which belong to their bodily condition;" the sole object was "to provide instruction and solace for their souls." The Executive Committee of the American Unitarian Association expressed a willingness to resign their care of the Ministry-at-large into the hands of the new organization, and the Committee, by whom the Report had been made, immediately proceeded to distribute it among the churches, and to solicit an early adoption of the plan. It was received with so much favor, that on the 10th of July delegates from nine of the religious societies, whose coöperation was desired, met for business in the Berry Street Vestry. The societies represented in this meeting were the Second Church, Brattle Square, the New North, the New South, King's Chapel, Federal Street, Hollis Street, the Twelfth Congregational, and Purchase Street. The First Church, and the West Church, declined a formal adoption of the plan, the South Congregational Society chose to defer action on the subject, and the Hawes Place Society, for local reasons,

decided to withhold their coöperation. The nature of the organization, under which the delegates were chosen, and which it was their first business to complete, will be learned from the by-laws, with the preamble, which were adopted at a subsequent meeting.

BY-LAWS OF THE CENTRAL BOARD OF THE BENEVOLENT FRATERNITY OF CHURCHES.

WHEREAS this Board has been organized in comformity to the principles expressed in the Report adopted April 27, 1834, especially as they are described in articles given on pages 14 and 15 of that Report, viz.

That the object of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches be the improvement of the moral state of the poor and irreligious of this city, by the support of the Ministry at large, and by other means;

That each congregation constitute itself, or create within itself, a Benevolent Association, in such manner as its members shall deem best, acting on the principle of as general coöperation as possible;

That each Association thus formed annually choose five delegates, who shall be the channel of communication between their respective congregations and the Executive Committee, and who shall together constitute a Central Board;

That the real power of control be in the congregations organized as above stated, while the Central Board shall possess an advisory power over the Committee, with whom the accomplishment of any measure shall rest;

Now therefore this Board, adopting these principles as expressive of the origin, purpose, and extent of the authority with which they are invested, do farther adopt the following by-laws.

1. The Central Board of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches shall be organized on the first Sunday evening after the annual Fast in each year, for which purpose a meeting shall be called by notices sent to the members elect by the Secretary of the former year. At this meeting shall be chosen a Chairman, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and two others; who shall together form the Executive Committee.

2. Quarterly meetings of the Central Board shall be held on the evening of the first Sunday in July, October, and January, and the Sunday immediately preceding the annual Fast, at such place and hour as the Executive Committee shall direct.

3. A special meeting of the Board shall be called by the Executive Committee whenever they see fit, and also at any time on request made to them by three of the Branches, or by ten members of the Central Board.

4. Notice of each quarterly, and special, meeting of the Board shall be sent by the Secretary to every member.

5. Every meeting of the Board shall be opened with prayer.

6. The rules of parliamentary usage shall be observed in respect to precedence of motions, order of debate, &c.

7. Any vacancy, which may occur in the Executive Committee, may be filled at an any subsequent meeting of the Board.

8. The Executive Committee may at their discretion invite the Ministers-at-large of the Fraternity, to attend the meetings of the Central Board.

9. It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee to devise, mature, and execute measures by which the object of the Fraternity may be advanced, and at each quarterly meeting to make a report of their proceedings during the previous quarter.

10. The Chairman and Secretary of the Central Board shall also be Chairman and Secretary of the Executive Committee.

11. The Executive Committee shall make such arrangements as they may deem best for a public annual meeting of the Fraternity on the evening of Fast day.

12. The "advisory power" of the Central Board consists, not only in the right of suggesting and recommending measures to the consideration and action of the Executive Committee, but also in their authority to review the proceedings of the Committee, and to disapprove, alter, or annul them, except in cases in which the validity of contracts would be affected.

13. The "real power of control," which is vested in the congregations or Branches of the Fraternity, consists in the right, which they may exercise, collectively or singly, whenever they please, to reduce, withhold, or withdraw their subscriptions, as well as to instruct their delegates in the Central Board to approve or disallow any measure.

14. Any measure may originate either in the Executive Committee, or in the Central Board, or in any one of the Branches of the Fraternity.

15. Whenever it shall appear to the Central Board necessary or proper to procure action in the churches upon any subject, the delegates at the Board shall lay it before their several Associations, and report the result to the Executive Committee, whose proceedings shall be governed by the information which they may receive.

The Central Board chose George Ticknor, Esq. Chairman, Rev. Ezra S. Gannett Secretary, William Hales, Esq. Treasurer, and Messrs. Elijah Cobb and Henry B. Rogers the other two members of the Executive Committee. This Committee entered at once upon their duties, and at the subsequent quarterly meetings of the Central Board made report of their proceedings, of which it may be proper to give here some account for the information of the members of the Fraternity.

The first subject which demanded attention was the transfer to the Fraternity of the interest of the American Unitarian Association in the Ministry-at-large. This was effected by acceding to the vote of the Executive Committee of that Association, requiring that our Committee "should assume the liabilities of the Ministry from the first of last May."

The Committee then proceeded to appoint Rev. Joseph Tuckerman, D. D., and Messrs. Charles F. Barnard and Frederick T. Gray, Ministers-at-large for one year, from the first of May, 1834, and determine the amount of their respective salaries. As the two latter gentlemen had not received ordination, and obvious reasons suggested the propriety of such a measure, an ecclesiastical council was assembled by invitation of the Executive Committee, and the usual forms of ordination were observed in the Federal Street meeting-house, on Sunday evening, November 2. The sermon and charge delivered on this occasion were afterwards printed by means of a subscription for the purpose.

It was indispensable that suitable places of worship should be provided for the congregations that might attend on the preaching of the Ministers-at-large. The Chapel in Friend Street, which had been used by Dr. Tuckerman, was built for this purpose, but it was in the hands of Trustees. A negotiation was opened to obtain the transfer of the building to us; which resulted in the decision of the Trustees, that "they were not authorized to make a transfer of their interest in the Chapel, but were willing to place it under the care and at the disposal of our Committee, to be used and appropriated by them for the free religious instruction of the poor of the city of Boston, and according to their discretion, provided that the said Committee keep the said building in good order and repair, insured against fire, and pay the expenses of the same from and after the 1st of November, 1834, while they shall so use it; the said Chapel being subject to the legal rights of the Trustees." This proposal was accepted, and a room was thus secured in that section of the city, which, though not very convenient of access, is well known, is commodiously furnished, and will accommodate three or four hundred persons. The use of the Ward-room in Tremont Street, (formerly one of the apartments in the Nassau Street school-house,) having been granted by the city, it was provided with the necessary accommodations for rather more than four hundred worshippers. Mr. Gray has the charge of the Friend Street Chapel, and Mr. Barnard of the Tremont Street Chapel.

In connexion with each of these Chapels is a large Sunday School, taught by persons of both sexes belonging to different congregations of the city, and assembled twice on every Sunday. Besides the instruction given in these schools, the children, during the usual hours of public worship, attend a religious service in the Chapels adapted peculiarly for them, and conducted by the Ministers-at-large. This service, which in its forms resembles the common religious exercises of our churches, but is meant to present truth in its simpler elements and with more familiar illustrations, has excited great interest on the part of the children, and has drawn many of their parents and friends to accompany them. On every Sunday evening the Ministers-at-large use the Chapels for preaching to adults, and have usually full congregations.

The plans and operations of the Ministers-at-large are familiar to the members of the Fraternity through their Reports, which have been freely distributed. These Reports will in future be made semi-annually, on the 1st of January and the 1st of July. The Ministers have wished to relieve themselves of attention to the temporal wants of the poor, that they might give their whole time to their moral and spiritual necessities, and for this end have promoted a coöperation among the various Benevolent Societies of the city, by which not only imposition is prevented or detected, but the Ministers are enabled to refer the relief of cases of distress to the agents of these societies. A room under the Savings Bank in Tremont Street, which had been previously hired and designated as the Office of the Visitors of the Poor, has been rented by the Committee of the Fraternity, and is used for regular meetings of delegates from these societies. It is also kept open every week day as a place where the poor may make known their wants, and receive at once such assistance as they need, whether in regard to physical comfort, or in the form of religious counsel. One of the Ministers-at-large spends the morning at this room ; while the others are visiting the families of their charge.

Five meetings of the Central Board were held the last year, at which much pleasant discussion arose on the Reports of the Executive Committee, and measures were proposed by

members of the Board. The subjects of "appropriate religious instruction for the children of the poor," and of "the neglect of the religious observance of the Sabbath by the poor," received particular attention, and drew forth (by request) valuable reports from the Ministers-at-large.

From the Treasurer's Annual Report it appears that the receipts of the last year were $2564.24, viz.

From the Second Church	Branch . .	$ 175.00
" Brattle Square	" . .	300.00
" New North	" . . .	150.00
" New South	" . .	309.18
" King's Chapel	" . . .	200.00
" Federal Street	" . .	460.00
" Hollis Street	" . . .	200.00
" 12th Congregational	" . .	225.00
" Purchase Street	" . .	175 00
" Parish Assoc. in the West Church		290.00
" Amer. Unit. Assoc., balance in their hands of money belonging to the Ministry-at-large . . .		80.06
		$ 2564.24

The payments within the same time have been $1979.88, viz.

For the Salaries of the Ministers-at-large .	$ 1350.00
" Chapels in Friend Street and Tremont Street	337.84
" Office of the Visitors of the Poor .	161.00
For printing Reports, Notices, &c. . .	122.29
Incidental expenses	8.75
	$ 1979.88

leaving a balance in the Treasurer's hands at the present time of $ 584.36, which will rather more than pay the salaries due on the 1st of May.

At the close of their Annual Report, presented at the celebration of the first anniversary, April 9, 1835, from which

most of the previous statements have been taken, the Central Board expressed "their hope, that an increase of subscriptions would enable the Executive Committee of the next year to extend the usefulness of the Fraternity." Its present means of operation are confined to the three Ministers-at-large, the two Chapels, the two Sunday Schools, and the Office of the Visitors of the Poor. No one can doubt that more ample provision should be made for the spiritual wants of the many who fall within the design of this institution. More ministers especially are needed, and would appear, if sufficient encouragement were given; while it ought not to be expected, that they will devote themselves to this work without at least some security for their own support. Five thousand dollars is not a larger sum, it is believed, than could be beneficially expended within a single year.

Nine months only have passed since the Fraternity was organized. The success with which it has been attended will, however, justify confidence alike in the practicability and in the wisdom of the plan. The single object which was contemplated at first has been steadfastly regarded and diligently pursued, and no inconvenience has been found to result from the nature of the organization. At once simple and extensive, embracing a large number of associates, and overlooking a wide field of benevolence, it still leaves both to churches and to individuals perfect freedom of action. It is commended to the sympathies and prayers of Christians, who remember that their Master came "to seek and to save that which was lost."